

Newsletter

Alamo Area Atari User Assoc.

1987 Meeting Schedule:

March 27
April 24
May 22
June 26
July 24

August 28
September 25
October 23
November 27
December (TBD)

← **NEXT MEETING!**

Meetings are held at 7:30 in the Cafeteria of
the San Antonio Savings Assoc (SASA) Bldg

A.A.A.U.A.
P.O. Box 79 — 1383
San Antonio, Texas
78279 — 1383



To:

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First Class Mail

The ALAMO AREA ATARI USER ASSOCIATION (AAAUA) is an independent ATARI computer user's association for users of 8-bit ATARI computers. AAAUA is not in any way affiliated with ATARI, Inc. nor with any other commercial organization. Meetings are held the fourth Friday of each month at 7:30PM at the San Antonio Savings Association (SASA) cafeteria. SASA is located at 601 N.W. Loop 410 at San Pedro, San Antonio, Texas. Parking is available on the Lockhill-Selma (North) side.

Dues are \$24 per year for an individual or family group. Membership includes a subscription to this newsletter and free access to the User's group Public Domain Disk Library, Educational Videotapes, Exchange Newsletters, Demonstrations of 8-Bit Atari related products, and AAAUA owned equipment.

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All correspondence including articles and exchange newsletters should be addressed to:

AAAUA
P.O. Box 79-1383
San Antonio, Texas 78279-1383

Articles may also be transmitted by modem either directly or through a BBS E-Mail. The program of preference is ATARIWRITER PLUS, although other formats will be accepted. Call any of the officers for further information.

Newsletter Editor:
Al Sherrill (512) 492-6633

President:
Johnny J. Weissmuller
(512) 349-9001

Vice-President:
Charles Walbourn
(512) 680-8630

Secretary-Treasurer
Thelma Sunvision
(512) 344-3522

AN OPEN LETTER TO SOFTWARE PRODUCERS by Alvan Sherrill, AAAUA

I know that many of you are tired of reading (and perhaps writing) about software protection and piracy and wish it would just go away. Sadly, it won't. As long as we live in an imperfect world, we will need to deal with human behavioral problems. I am writing this in the hope to point out some of the reasons (not excuses) for software copying (not necessarily "pirating". Please note that I said "reasons", not "excuses". There are good and valid reasons for wanting to make a copy of a program and no excuses are needed. There are also reasons people make illegal copies and no excuses are suggested. I am not condoning illegal copying of software, nor am I excusing the practice. If, during this letter you conclude that I am, please re-read this first paragraph. To repeat, I am not condoning piracy! But I do intend to remind you of some of the reasons for piracy and what, in my opinion, you can do to reduce it. Or better yet, how you can improve your profits, which, after all, I'm sure you'll agree, is the bottom line (to coin a phrase). I also want to remind you that not all copying is piracy. I'm sure you know this, but at times it seems you tend to forget. I also feel compelled to state that the AAAUA in no way condones the illegal copying of software and does all in its power to discourage it.

First, I would like to remind you that the existence of an illegal copy of a program is not prima facie evidence of a lost sale. Many people have copies of programs only because they are free. They may not even ever use them! Have you heard of collectors? The name of the game is to have as many programs as possible, the ultimate goal being to have every program, obviously a virtual impossibility. If these people had to buy their programs, 99% of them would give up this obsession. It is my guess that a relatively small percentage of these copies represent lost sales. But I can tell you how to make this small percentage even smaller!

But first, let's acknowledge that there are people who would steal any time they have the opportunity. There are those who would steal money from the poor box in church. There are those who would steal pencils from the blind beggar. These examples and similar ones are not necessarily mutually exclusive but they are examples of those who have no sense of social responsibility. They are examples of sociopaths. Fortunately, they are in the minority, in my opinion. Also, most likely, few of those work with computers. But you always will have to contend with that small percentage. That's part of the price of living in an imperfect world. So copy protection would be justified for sociopaths who owned computers and did not have the ability to circumvent the protection scheme.

Now let's look at the hobbyist, called the "hacker" by some. (This always seemed a rather undignified term to me. It implies incompetency and lack of knowledge, quite the contrary of most "hackers" I know!) Anyway, to this group, copy protection poses a challenge. "Am I capable of breaking this protection scheme?" And many are able to crack the protection. If there were such a thing as an "unbreakable" code, which I don't think there is, this group of hobbyists would eventually give up and go on to other programs. In this case, protection could be justified because it provides the "hacker" with entertainment, unless you ever achieve the ultimate scheme, which would then result in lost sales because you would have the unsolvable puzzle!

The ATARI, as has been frequently said, has a large percentage of hobbyists who write their own programs and are always trying to figure out how to get more out of their machines. We are interested not only in making it work, but learning how it works. This speaks well for the ATARI as it shows the versatility of the 8 bit machine. Now, when you, the producers, hide your directories or otherwise prevent the user from accessing or listing your code, you prevent the legitimate hobbyist from learning from your program. In other words, everyone must re-invent the wheel. So please give some consideration to making code accessible to the hobbyist so that the program can also serve as a learning tool. Many programs do this. Perhaps you feel that your code is privileged information. If so, so be it. The thought is just for your consideration.

We are now down to the majority, the other legitimate user's. I think that most of you would agree that the legitimate purchaser of software has the right to make back-up copies of his investment. This need is so obvious that it barely deserves discussion. How many users have crashed programs and not had a back-up? As I know you can imagine, it is quite infuriating, not to mention inconvenient and expensive. And I realize that most of you are also computer users so you probably have experienced this yourself on at least one occasion. Now, if a user has the right to a back-up, how is he to get it if the disk is protected? He can write the producer and usually buy a back-up. This is not only costly but time consuming. Also, many producers charge an exorbitant price for something that should have been included in the package in the first place. Or better still, if the program were unprotected, the user easily could make his own back-up. Most users would happily agree to this.

"But", you say, "if we did not protect our software, our programs would quickly proliferate across the country and we would lose megabucks!" I don't think that would necessarily follow. Let's take a moment and examine human behavior. I think that many would agree with me when I say that most people are basically honest. They will only cheat or steal

if, in their own minds, there is no other alternative or it is otherwise justified. Would you condemn a man for stealing food to give to his starving children if he had no means to acquire it otherwise? It is still theft no matter what the circumstances. I realize that starving children do not need computer programs but I cite this example to make a point. If a person feels an illegal act is justified, he or she will do it provided there is little chance of getting caught and paying a penalty. Another example. Suppose a man takes his car to the garage to get a minor adjustment to the engine. When he picks up the car, he is presented with a \$200 bill. Grudgingly, he pays, but on the way home he finds that the original problem was not repaired. He takes the car back but the garage refuses to give him his money back or make good the repairs. Now he is really miffed. (I know, he could pay by check or by credit card then stop payment, but suppose he paid cash. After all, it's my story!) When he gets home, he finds a \$200 set of tools that was accidentally left in the trunk. (I know that is unlikely but again, it is my story) Can you understand how this man could justify keeping the tools? Of course, it's wrong, but in his own mind, justified. He did not receive value for money paid. Now let's translate that to computer programs. If a shoddy program is sold for several times its value and/or the documentation is poorly written, incomplete, or worse, incorrect, can you understand how the legitimate user might feel justified in amortizing his loss by giving away or selling copies of the program? Sure, it's wrong! But, in his or her own mind, it's justified. Take the case of the protected program. If the producer makes back-up copies available only at an unjustifiably high cost, or if the user chooses to acquire the necessary hardware/software to break the protection, can you understand that the user might feel justified in amortizing his unreasonable cost for the program? Have you heard of any cases recently where a book has been pirated? Why? I submit that it is because most people feel that the value justifies the cost. Suppose the book were to cost \$1000 or even \$500. Do you suppose there would be more pirating of the books? Now if you think I am advocating or justifying pirating, please re-read paragraph one! I am attempting to explain why, in my opinion, much pirating goes on. Reasons, not excuses. Value received for money paid. I think I have made the point.

Copy protection is a pain. The user has a legitimate need for back-up programs. You, the producers, at least many of you, do little to provide back-ups at a reasonable cost and prevent the user from easily making his own by copy protection schemes. Worse, the protection schemes frequently make the use of program more difficult. Drives needlessly grind away and programs fail to load or operate properly. I understand there have even been threats that the program or computer can be damaged if the user attempts to make a copy! I do not personally know if this has ever happened but even the possibility or threat is unethical, in my opinion. Let's

face it, computers and programs are fragile. One tiny bit out of place can mess up the whole program. I'm sure I am not telling you something you don't already know. Some schemes such as a key disk, plug-in module, or "look up a code word" are better but still an inconvenience. Are these copy protection schemes in the best interest of the consumer? Or even in your best interest?

So how can you reduce piracy? Or better, how can you increase your income? First, as mentioned, give fair value for price charged. If it's not up to your high standards, forget it. Or give it away as public domain (without your label if it embarrasses you). Or publish it under another label and charge what it's worth. Second, include decent documentation. There are many examples of excellent documentation: Paperclip, AtariWriter Plus, Letterperfect, Dataperfect, Flight Simulator II, and others. What I'm talking about is ink smeared printing on one or two sheets of poor quality paper filled with misspelled words, grammatical errors and ambiguous sentences. In addition, some writing could be easily understood if the reader already understood the program, but leaves the novice right out in the cold. If computer experts can't or won't write, then hire a technical writer who can write understandable text. It's widely known how poor most documentation is. Include good documentation! Produce unprotected software so the user can make his own back-up. If you can't see your way clear to do that, then at least include a back-up copy with the program. Don't try to charge another \$20 or even \$10 to provide that which you should have included in the first place. It is noteworthy that some software producers have gone to unprotected programs. Most recently, Lotus dropped copy protection on 1-2-3 and Symphony; this is a good trend. I recently overheard several knowledgeable computer users discussing copy protection and two said they had chosen an unprotected word processor over a protected one simply to avoid the hassle of getting a back-up and to avoid the possibility of messing up the original through user error. Both programs were high quality, state-of-the-art programs selling at about the same price. I have heard a number of others say they would always choose the unprotected program over the protected one if they possibly could.

Another thorn in the side is the disclaimer that appears in the documentation of many programs. I am referring to the statement that the manufacturer "makes no warranties, either expressed or implied, with respect to the documentation or software, its quality, performance, merchantability, or fitness for any particular purpose. It is sold 'as is'. The entire risk as to its quality and performance lies with the buyer, etc. etc." How about that? Now what would you say if a similar statement were to appear on the sales contract of the next car that you buy? "No warranty. This car may not run more than 100 miles. We don't even guarantee that it will

get you home! The brakes may or may not work. It's entirely your risk!". Would you buy it? You don't need to answer; I think I know what you would say. Most software does state that if the disk fails within 90 days, they will give you a new disk. Big deal. Why not make it five or ten years, or at least one year. Sometimes a bad disk might not be discovered for several months. Would it really cost you that much to give that protection to the consumer considering the good will it would generate? Come on, guys. Who's gonna be first?

It seems reasonable to me that if the software producers were to abandon copy protection, they would lose only a small percentage of sales as the result of the person who has no compunctions about piracy, PROVIDED they give fair value for price charged and provide support for customers. I think most people believe in fair play and would not abuse this consideration. On the other side of the coin, the removal of the copy protection irritant along with a program of good value, good documentation and customer support would go a long way in creating good customer relations. This would spread ("not the program") and the result most likely be an increase in sales. The key word is QUALITY. Are you prepared for the increased profits?

AN OPEN LETTER TO SOFTWARE USERS by Alvan Sherrill, AAAUA

Have you read my open letter to software producers? If not, please read it now. It will give you a frame of reference. If you have read it, please continue.

I think most of you will agree with what I said, at least in basic content. I base this conclusion on a number of discussions I have had with a number of users. If you have serious disagreement, let me know. I'm still learning. But in this letter to you, I want to suggest some things and ask you for your suggestions. What we all are looking for is improved and innovative software. The question is, how to get it.

Now, if you think this will be a lecture about not pirating software, you are wrong. First of all, there are some fine shades of gray between legitimate and illegitimate copying. Some of you perhaps would disagree with me. I suspect that especially software producers would be more inclined to see it as a black and white issue. But, having said that, I believe that there is rather a clear distinction between flagrant "pirating" and making legitimate back-up copies for your own use. Most of you know what's right and wrong and you don't need anyone to tell you. For those few that don't know the difference, I don't think it would do much good to try to explain it here. But, in addition to the moral point of view, there is the pragmatic view.

The only way we are going to get new, improved and innovative software is to allow the writers and producers to make a fair profit. As I know most of you appreciate, especially if you have tried writing some programs, producing a good computer program is an enormous task. If people are going to make this their life's work, which indeed it must be if we are to have good programming, then they must receive fair compensation. That statement is so obvious that I wonder why I bothered to make it. But we need to remember it. Those who support our computers and provide us with much needed programs need to be rewarded. And when they fall short, they need to be told. So suggestion #1-Write and tell the software producers what you like and what you don't like. Praise where praise is due; and express your views when you are disappointed.

If you like the idea of unprotected software, then buy unprotected software in preference to the protected variety whenever it meets your needs. And when you write, tell them why you bought their software. If you find software you like, spread the word, not the disk. If someone gives you some illegally copied software, you still can do the right thing. And I don't necessarily mean turn in the person who gave it to you. It may be your boss. Does anyone suggest telling your boss that you are going to turn him in for pirating copyrighted materials? Sure you are! But what you can do is try the program and if you like it, buy a legitimate copy. If not, copy over it and forget it. If you find copyrighted programs on a BBS, let the SYSOP know. Every SYSOP I have ever talked to is adamant in keeping copywrited material off his board, unless permission has been given to distribute it. Shareware is an example. If you haven't heard of shareware, it is copyrighted software that may be distributed freely, the idea being that the user, if he/she likes the program and plans to use it, he/she sends a specified or unspecified donation. It seems like a great idea; I just hope it survives. Remember "copyright" means that the producer lays down the rules as to how and when and where the software may be used. The rules may be very loose, e.g. freely distributed but not for profit; or they may be very tight, e.g. licensed for a limited use by a particular person at a particular location. Some of the wording of the specifics may be open to some interpretation, hence the shades of gray I spoke of earlier. But most of us will not be involved in any of these fine interpretations. Just remember, copyright and copy protection are two completely different things. Copy protection is simply the means that some producers use to try to enforce their copyright rules. Unfortunately, it is a great inconvenience and additional cost to the legitimate user.

So there you have it. You know what is right and wrong and your behavior is up to you. You also know the consequences, two of which are lesser quality software and more difficult copy protection. What is it you want? Support and unprotected

quality software? If you agree with me, let's let the software producers know. Maybe we can convince them to make life simpler for all of us, producers and users alike.

NOTE: The remainder of this newsletter is dedicated to a copy of the proposed Constitution and Bylaws. Please read this proposal and the AAAUA President's Corner which follows.

At the meeting on Friday, we will appoint the nominating committee and the Constitutional Revision Committee (CRC), so be there so you can be imposed upon. (Ha Ha!)

-- Johnny

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Proposed User Group Constitution

Article I: User Group Name & Function

Section 1: User Group Name

The Official name of this Atari User Group shall be: (Name = ***), hereafter referred to as (Insert the Acronym of "***") in this Constitution.

Section 2: User Group Function

*** User Group is hereby established as a Not-For-Profit Atari Computer User Group, primarily designed for support of all 8-Bit Atari computers.

Article II: Basic Objectives

Section 1: Basic Objective #1 (Pirating)

The 1st and MOST IMPORTANT Basic Objective for the *** User Group is to work towards a 100% Pirate Free Atari Community.

Pirating has been determined not only to cause the disruption in the production of software and hardware, but to condone theft while being a member of ***.

Therefore, the 1st rule in this and any other Atari User Group should be to halt any pirating efforts.

Pirating, or the discussion of "Ways" in which one could pirate any product, shall NOT be condoned during ANY *** User Group meeting.

ANY MEMBER found to be dealing in pirated material during *** meetings, shall:

- <1> Be designated as "NOT FIT FOR MEMBERSHIP" in ***,
- <2> Forfeit all rights and privileges to membership in ***,
- <3> Immediately forfeit any and all paid Dues in ***.

Members shall deal with pirating on there own when not at a *** User Group meeting, and no personal pirating projects shall be recognized at any *** User Group meeting.

Section #2: Basic Objective #2 (Association)

Objective #2 shall be to associate owners and users of all Atari 8-Bit computers with other people that have the same interests.

Section #3: Basic Objective #3 (Promotion)

All members should promote the usefullness all of Atari 8-Bit computer systems and third party equipment compatable with Atari 8-Bit computers through the active exchange of knowledge and experience.

Section #4: Basic Objective #4 (Learning)

Experienced members should promote the development of computer programs by offering classes or lessons in all different Atari 8-Bit computer system languages and techniques of same.

Article III: Types of Meetings and Quorum Configurations

Section 1: General Membership Meeting

There shall be at least one (1) General Membership meeting per calendar month on the (Insert day of month) unless circumstances beyond the control of the User Group prevent such a meeting.

This meeting shall be held at (Insert location). This, being the designated location voted on by members.

Section 2: Gamers SIG Meeting

There shall be at least one (1) Gamers SIG meeting on the (Insert day of month) unless circumstances prevent such a meeting.

There shall be NO Official User Group business conducted during the Gamers SIG meeting, whatsoever.

Section 3: Executive Officer Meeting

There shall be one (1) Executive Officer Business Meeting once each month, held AT LEAST ONE (1) WEEK PRIOR to the General Membership meeting, for Executive Officers ONLY to discuss items that would normally take too long in the General Membership meeting.

These items will then be brought forward at the General Membership meeting.

Section 4: Special Meetings

Unscheduled Special Meetings of any type may be called to order at the discretion of the President (Chairman) with the concurrence of at least one other Executive Officer of ***. Members or Officers affected shall be notified no less than seven (7) days prior to any Special Meetings.

Section 5: Active Member Quorum

At all General Membership meetings of ***, a quorum shall consist of no less than one third (1/3) of the current ACTIVE membership. An ACTIVE member is any person with dues paid in full through the current month of the General Membership meeting.

Said quorum MUST be present to conduct any business transactions for ***.

In lieu of a quorum, the President shall have sole responsibility in determining whether a meeting shall take place as scheduled.

Article IV: Membership and Dues

Section 1: General Membership

General Membership in *** is open to all, providing dues are paid as required in Section 3, below.

Section 2: New Membership

New Membership shall be established on the date that Membership Dues are paid. Current User Group Privileges will, at that time, be rendered to any new member, as long as Dues are paid as required in Section 3, below.

Section 3: Membership Dues

Dues SHALL be paid at the rate of \$12 semi-annually, payable in advance.

Members are ASKED to pay dues in full one (1) month before expiration of previous dues. This shall prevent lapses of dues.

Members MAY pay dues, in advance, for more than one (1) six-month interval.

Section 4: Dues Exemptions

Absolutely NO Exemptions will be made from paying dues.

Section 5: Lapses In Dues

Members allowing Dues to lapse, past any due date, shall forfeit all User Group rights and privileges.

Members allowing any lapse in dues, except for unforeseen difficulties, and desiring continued membership will pay a dues penalty. This penalty will be no more and no less than, \$1.00, payable at membership renewal.

Article V: Elective Offices

Section 1: Rights

The right to hold an elective office and to chair any User Group committees shall be open to active members only.

Section 2: Executive Officers

The Executive Officers of ***, being twelve (12) in number, and listed in order of Seniority, shall be:

- <1> President (Chairman)
- <2> Vice President
- <3> Secretary
- <4> Treasurer
- <5> Senior Newsletter Editor
- <6-7> Newsletter Staff [2 Members]
- <8-9> Public Relations Staff [2 Members]
- <10> Master Librarian
- <11> Public Domain Disk/Magazine Librarian
- <12> Disk Of The Month Editor

Section 3: Term Of Office

The term of office for ALL Officers shall be six (6) months in duration. Any Officer may be re-elected for a maximum of 4 consecutive terms (2 years) in the same office.

Section 4: Nominations

Nominations of Officers shall be at the General Meeting in the month prior to the actual elections (October and April).

Section 5: Consent

Consent from ANY person being considered for an Officer position MUST be obtained BEFORE his/her name can be placed into nomination. This can be done during the Nomination Month as stated above, in Section 4.

Section 6: Officer Elections

Election of Executive Officers shall be held at the General Membership Meeting by WRITTEN vote, in the months of November and May.

The Election shall be by popular vote of the members PRESENT, and by SEALED BALLOT sent to the Official User Group address.

The envelope containing the ballot MUST be marked "BALLOT" by addressee, or it shall be invalid as the envelope may be opened in error.

Ballots will NOT be opened until AFTER the count of votes of the members PRESENT, at the meeting in the Election month, if a quorum exists.

Section 7: Election Validity

The election will be valid ONLY if a quorum exists.

If no quorum exists at the General Meeting in the election month, the current Executive Officers shall retain their positions until the next General Membership Meeting.

At that time, a new vote will be taken by members PRESENT, and mailed ballots shall be opened.

Article VI: Executive Officer Duties

Section 1: President (Chairman)

The President (Chairman) shall preside over, maintain control of, and have general supervision at each meeting, whatever its purpose.

He/She shall preside over ALL of the business and affairs of ***, and perform such other duties as rightfully pertain to His/Her office as stated elsewhere in this constitution. He/She shall appoint ALL committee leaders.

Section 2: Vice President

The Vice President shall perform the duties of the President (Chairman) in His/Her absence.

He/She shall perform such duties as the President (Chairman) designates as being required in support of the User Group.

If an unforeseen incident prevents the President (Chairman) from continuing to perform His/Her duties as prescribed above in Section 1, then the Vice-President will stand in place of the President (Chairman) until such time as the next normal Election takes place. The Vice Presidential position shall be left open until the next scheduled Election.

If such circumstances prevent the President (Chairman) or Vice President from performing their assigned duties as designated, control of the General Meetings shall pass on to the next lower Executive Officer as described in this Constitution, immediately.

Section 3: Secretary

The Secretary shall be responsible for recording the accurate minutes of each General and Executive meeting.

Minutes from each meeting shall be transcribed within one week of each meeting, and COPIES shall be forwarded to the President (Chairman) and Vice President.

The Minutes shall be saved and safely stored in disk form for future reference, and for placement in the User Group area of a Group supported BBS, if such shall exist.

A copy of the previous months minutes shall be present at each meeting, and the Secretary will read these minutes when called upon to do so.

The Secretary, at each General Membership meeting, shall collect all Dues to keep an ACTIVE list of members at ALL times.

All collected funds shall then be transferred directly to the User Group Treasurer at each meeting.

The Secretary shall pass a Current Membership list to ANY Officer that desires such, and without question, to the SysOp of a Group supported BBS.

This, to be used to control access to special User Group areas on the BBS, if such exists.

The Secretary shall gain and maintain a mailing list of all ACTIVE members. This mailing list shall be passed to the Senior Newsletter Editor for Newsletter distribution.

Section 4: Treasurer

The Treasurer shall be responsible for maintaining an accurate record of ALL User Group funds and transactions. A monthly report shall be provided to the General Membership when called upon to do so.

All funds received, handled, and expended shall be accounted for in a sequential log book, and as specified by the Executive Officers if special requirements exist.

The Treasurer shall obtain and maintain a Dedicated Bank Savings Account for storage of ALL *** User Group funds.

The financial records of all funds received, handled and expended shall be audited by an Auditing Committee on the day of, and prior to, any Election of User Group Officers.

The Auditing Committee shall consist of at least two (2) Regular Members of the User Group.

Section 5: Senior Editor (Newsletter)

The Senior Newsletter Editor has the responsibility to produce a MONTHLY Newsletter, regardless of its size. Each Newsletter must be completed and available for the membership at each General Membership meeting.

Members not present at this meeting shall be mailed a newsletter within one week of the meeting. The Senior Newsletter Editor shall receive an active mailing list from the Secretary at each meeting.

The Senior Newsletter Editor shall have at His/Her disposal, a Newsletter Staff of not less than two (2) persons.

The Senior Newsletter Editor shall have the sole authority and responsibility for including any data into the Newsletter at His/Her discretion, keeping in mind (c)opyrighted material and other limitations resulting from the use of unauthorized material.

Section 6: Newsletter Staff [2]

The Newsletter Staff is responsible for acquiring data to be used in each monthly newsletter for the User Group.

ALL data received for the Newsletter shall be given to the Senior Newsletter Editor at His/Her prescribed cutoff date so that the Newsletters can be printed in time for each meeting.

The Newsletter Staff shall work together to actively seek out data for inclusion into the Newsletter, keeping in mind (c)opyrights, and other limitations.

Absolutely NO Copyrighted material or advertisements shall be placed in the Newsletter without permission from the Author or Advertiser.

It shall be the responsibility of the Newsletter Staff to actively seek out and gain paid advertisements to support printing costs of the newsletter and other User Group activities.

Any company or organization currently supporting Atari 8-Bit hardware or software shall be considered eligible for inclusion into the newsletter.

All incoming Advertisement monies shall be coordinated through the *** User Group Treasurer.

Section 7: Public Relations Staff [2]

AT LEAST two (2) Official Public Relations representatives people shall be responsible for representing the User Group to any individual or organization requesting information.

The Public Relations Staff shall coordinate, create and maintain an accurate informational pamphlet or and/or

hand-out to be given to potential members and organizations that support Atari 8-Bit equipment.

Funds for reproducing said information shall be coordinated through the User Group Treasurer

Any information being prepared for handout shall be coordinated through the User Group Vice-President. He/She shall have an active say in what information is presented to the general public.

Section 8: Master Librarian

The Master Librarian shall create, maintain and update a User Group Library of Donated Hardware and Software.

An accurate record of items shall be kept updated, and He/She shall be responsible for keeping all donated equipment in the condition it was received.

The Master Librarian shall have on hand, at every General Membership meeting, the ENTIRE contents of the Library for member check-out during breaks in meetings.

The Master Librarian is the ONLY individual authorized to check out items to members.

A MAXIMUM of three (3) items may be checked out by any member in any one month, and those items must be returned at the next General Membership meeting, without fail, unless other conditions are set by either the President (Chairman) or the Vice President.

If an item has not been returned by the next meeting, a fine of not more than, but not less than \$0.25 shall be levied against the member for every day that the material remains out of the Library.

If an item is checked out by a member, and damaged before it has been returned to the Group Library, that member MUST replace the damaged item with working like item within 45 days, or pay the donator a sum equal to its replacement cost.

Section 9: PD Disk Librarian

The PD Disk Librarian shall be responsible for an accurate recording of all PD files collected or donated by the members of the User Group.

He/She shall coordinate the contents of the PD Library with the DOTM Editor so a useful and workable Disk Of The Month can be created.

He/She shall record the following data as a MINIMUM:

<a> FILENAME.EXT

 Disk # it is on

Section 10: Disk Of The Month Editor

The DOTM Editor shall be responsible for creating a useful and workable single or double sided DOTM, utilizing Atari DOS 2.0s.

The DOTM shall contain ALL Public Domain files from the PD Library.

ALL files on the DOTM shall be in working condition and be related, in some way, to one another.

The DOTM Editor shall take suggestions from, and present the current DOTM to, the General Membership at each meeting.

All blank disks needed by the DOTM Editor will come from the PD Librarians cache, and be supported by User Group funds.

Article VII: Other User Groups

Section 1: Coordination

The *** User Group shall maintain an active correspondence with other Atari 8-Bit User Groups.

This may be in the form of sharing DOTM's, Newsletters, or any other way that the General Membership votes on.

Section 2: Incorporating

If, at any time, another Atari 8-Bit User Group wishes to combine forces with ***, the General Membership shall vote to determine feasibility and coordination of efforts.

Every effort shall be made to satisfy both existing User Groups, but the *** User Group shall retain its name as the presiding User Group.

All funds and current membership dues from another User Group shall be combined, incorporated and recognized by ***.

AAAUA President's Corner

By J. Weissmuller

Regardless of what another User Groups' dues have been, any active member of the other User Group shall retain active membership until their dues become due.

At that time, *** dues have priority and shall be collected according to the rules set forth in this Constitution.

Article VIII: Amendments

Section 1: Quorum Voting

This Constitution may, at any General Membership meeting, be amended by a vote of two-thirds (2/3) of the current ACTIVE members voting approval, provided that members are notified of any possible changes at the previous meeting.

Section 2: Voting By Mailed Ballot

Any ACTIVE member unable to attend a meeting may vote on any amendment by means of a SIGNED and SEALED BALLOT sent to the Official User Group address.

Ballot envelope must state "BALLOT", or it is invalid, as it could be inadvertently opened before a vote takes place.

Section 3: Approval Date

Amendments, so approved by vote, shall become effective immediately, unless an effective date is otherwise stated in the amendment.

Article IX: Rules Of Order

Section 1: Unknown Rules

In the absence of rules in this Constitution, the proceedings of ALL meetings shall be conducted in accordance with "Roberts Rules Of Order".

***** End of Proposed Constitution *****

In case you haven't guessed, adopting a new constitution is high on my list of priorities for AAAUA. This is partly due to the fact that the "Club Records" I inherited upon taking office DID NOT include a valid copy of an AAAUA Constitution or Bylaws. In the absence of such, I feel compelled to see that a reasonable document be adopted and placed in our disk library for future officers.

I expect every member to read and review this proposed constitution PRIOR TO the 23 OCTOBER meeting this Friday. Our business meeting, which will include a discussion of this proposal, will still be limited to its 30 minute format, and I have NO INTENTION of reading this aloud. If you want ANY CHANGES you will have to volunteer for the Constitutional Revision Committee (CRC). The CRC will be appointed PRIOR to discussion so that they may take careful notes of any member objections.

It is important to note that the idea of a single 8-bit Atari User Group has been OBE (Overcome By Events), in that the Randolph Group has already voted to NOT consolidate. In other words, we are working on a new AAAUA Constitution, not a "joint" constitution requiring any outside coordination. This is an opportunity for us to change our name, if we wish, and I would like THAT discussed on Friday.

Do bring your NEWSLETTER to the meeting as I will NOT have extra copies of the constitution.

Remember, OCTOBER is the last month that we will be meeting in the SASA Cafeteria. Our November meeting will probably be in the SIMMS Building, across Lockhill-Selma from SASA, towards Blanco.

